



NEWS RELEASE

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USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRENTON MEDICAL CENTER, INC. CELEBRATE PEDIATRICS CENTER GROUNDBREAKING

Trenton, FL, June 8, 2004 — Children's healthcare services in Gilchrist and Levy counties are taking a dramatic step forward. Today's groundbreaking of a new pediatric medical clinic means increased access to medical care thanks to funding provided by USDA Rural Development. During an October 2003 ceremony at the Trenton Medical Center, USDA Rural Development awarded a \$962,500 low interest Community Facilities loan to the medical center for the construction of a new 5,960 Sq. Ft. pediatric medical facility.

Trenton Medical Center, Inc., a non-profit organization serving Gilchrist and Levy counties, opened its doors in 1988, establishing the pediatrics unit in 2001. The center currently operates its pediatric medical service from a mobile building, seeing over 40 pediatric patients per day in four exam rooms by one pediatrician. The expanded facility will enable Trenton Medical Center staff to better serve more patients.

Small rural communities face special difficulties in attracting healthcare providers and facilities in their efforts to ensure that their residents have this critical access. Rural communities have significant health related needs and problems but substantially fewer health resources. Issues affecting rural medical care include a lack of public transportation to and from medical services, difficulty in retaining health care providers, difficulty for managed care providers to achieve economies of scale, and a significant number of residents are not covered by health insurance. USDA Rural Development is committed to improving access to health care for medically under-served communities.

During today's groundbreaking ceremony, USDA Rural Development State Director Charles W. Clemons, Sr., said, "Rural Development strives to assist rural communities in advancing the delivery of health care. This clinic will be a great resource for hundreds of individuals and families, and we are excited by the positive step this new facility represents in improving access to health care for children."

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. Further information on rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

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